1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

they recognize Sekulu Sikilili, the elder of the largest unit, as the village headman. Only in his village is there a dancing floor (*otili*),[1] which is the centre of village life, social, legal, and recreational. As the name indicates, it is first and foremost a place for recreation, but here also religious functions are held since they involve so much dancing and drinking, and here formal cases are tried. The *otili* is the heart of the village.

The Men's Club-House. Ngendo does not have that other important Umbundu institution, the Men's Club House (*onjango*).[2] The *onjango* is, or was, hardly less important than the *otili*. Perhaps before it fell to its present state of disuse, its place was of even greater importance, for in the *onjango* all the men, youths, and boys gathered day by day for the evening meal. From all the kitchens came baskets of stiff corn porridge (*iputa*), and dishes of relish (*ombelela*)[3] which all shared, from the most honoured guest or the village elders, down to the naked, ash-whitened little boys just old enough (say from seven or eight years) to leave the kitchens to their mothers and sisters. In the *onjango* guests were entertained, judicial cases of lesser import were settled, the day's work and gossip discussed, and youth was educated by precept and example in nearly everything from traditional history to etiquette. The *onjango* was dining-room, living-room, court, school, hotel, and club, all in one. For some of the Ovimbundu it continues to function. Upon inquiry I found that in all Kasonge there were hardly ten villages where the *onjango* existed and retained its former functions. The reasons which my informants assigned are that the demands for road work (in the immediate region), for contract labour (involving absences of from six months to two years), and the difficulty of securing tax-money, did not leave the leisure required for the common meal in the *onjango*. When I made wider inquiries as to localities where the *onjango* now exists and retains its former functions, it seems that this institution is widely decadent. According to my information, the regions where it continues to function are chiefly in Ngalangi, in Viye, and

[1] *Otili* comes from the verb *oku tili*, to dance.

[2] *Onjango* has been traced to the verb *oku vanjula*, to converse, but I am doubtful of this derivation. It has been called 'The Palaver House', but this is an evident misnomer, for the *onjango* is much more than that.

[3] *Ombelela* is a word to cover any dish which may be eaten with the porridge staple. It may be meat, beans, mushrooms, or greens, and is prepared with gravy into which pieces of the stiff porridge may be dipped (*oku vilika*).

233 The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry
[309] season the grass withers. Childe states[1] that "Herding has been a function of the sister's son, and even now there is a reluctance on the part of the boys to herd for their fathers."

235 462 [344] Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but other animals only by men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with his owning a chicken.

231 Hambly states that goats are more common than any other animal, and that every family has one or more. These animals are not fed or watered, but are allowed to wander to find their own sustenance. Goats are not milked. Young males are castrated. The goat is frequently used in sacrifices. Sheep also are allowed to find their own food; the males are not castrated. Pigs are cared for comparatively carefully, receiving water and a daily supply of sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some corn. Male pigs are castrated.[2]

APICULTURE[3]

[439] Beeswax was an important item of trade in the caravan days, and is still sold to Portuguese traders' stores, where it is massed into large rectangular cakes for export. Honey is eaten alone or with manioc, and a fermented beer called ochaso is made by adding honey to corn-beer. [343] [273] [253] Fibre strainers are used for cleaning the wax, and large shallow baskets are employed for drying the honey in the sun.

Large cylindrical hives, which are private property, are placed high in the trees. These are made by removing a cylinder of bark and lashing the halves together with strands of bark, forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot.

In Elende honey is removed from the hives during the months of August and December. One man ascends the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fibre, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

326 782 Smithing. The profession of blacksmith or ocivinde is an important one, and, like hunting and divining, is sacred and is entered with special ritual. Often, but not always, these three professions are passed on by inheritance. For smithing two years' apprenticeship to a member of the profession is necessary, and is usually entered upon at the age of eighteen. At the end of this period the master examines his pupil, and makes tools for him, especially the heavy hammer or onjundo which is regarded as symbolic of his craft. For the inauguration ceremony the boy provides four chickens (2 male, 2 female), a dog, and a goat; the blood of these animals is sprinkled on his tools, and their flesh is eaten at a feast [553] attended by the villagers. Throughout the procedure the boy remains standing on the small anvil. Finally he is asked to choose his professional name; he then steps down from the anvil a qualified blacksmith.

(1) Childe, 1949, p.100.
(2) Hambly, (c) 1954.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.154.

3; Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 175 wide distribution in Africa (C. Wiedemann, 1909) and the ceremony still survives among the Ovimbundu in modified form.

[114] Though an informative writer, Monteiro is sometimes vague; he says (I, p. 278) that circumcision is a universal custom among the blacks of Angola. In view of the extent of Angola, the diversity of tribes, and the fact that Monteiro traveled over only a small part of the country, this information is misleading.

Monteiro is the only writer in whose works I have found a reference to the Vasele tribe; probably no part of Angola has been so neglected as the Esele country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo. At the present day the Vasele have a reputation for cannibalism.
[266] Monteiro saw human flesh eaten at Cuacra, while the skulls of the victims were placed on adjacent trees. Monteiro states (II, p. 167) that on the death of a king the Mucelis (Vasele) put out all the fires in the kingdom; these were relighted by the succeeding king who
[321] used fire produced by rubbing two sticks together. The flat beads of shell called *dongos*, made from *Achatina monsteryia* (II, p. 168), are made today and traded to the far south of Angola, where their novelty assures them a value far beyond their intrinsic worth. I was fortunate in obtaining an example of the old beheading ax mentioned by Monteiro (II, p. 157) and sketched by Cavazzi (p. 210). Par-
[262] boiled and roasted rats were offered to me as food; Monteiro mentions the offering of a roasted rat on a skewer (I, p. 99).

The account of Commander V. L. Cameron, who left Zanzibar for his journey across Africa in 1873, mentions several points of anthropological importance in relation to the Angolan section of his
[756] journey. Cameron saw a net-covered medicine-man of the Kibokue (Vachokue) wearing a mask and a kilt of grass (p. 384). The function
[524] of this man was to frighten devils from the woods. The contest in which boys discharge their arrows at a rolling root was seen by Cameron near Kagnombe (Cangamba?). Skulls of victims killed in
[787] war were spiked on poles (p. 399). The diviner was followed by attendants who struck iron gongs, while the diviner himself shook a rattle made of basket-work in the form of a dumb-bell (p. 404). Cameron gives an accurate description of the divination basket and its use without going into details. These I have been able to supply
[482] (chapter IX). The explorer met caravans of Bihéans, renowned carriers then as they are today. They were usually drunk and abusive; in some instances they attempted to rob the stragglers.
000 The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p. 416): "A man cut open

The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p. 416): "A man cut open a large cocoon, extracted the contents, and smacked his lips with great gusto." My field notes mention the use of caterpillars as food. [262] 171 175

Capello and Ivens (1877–80) remark on the burial places of hunters which are distinguishable by the skulls of antelopes, buffalo, and hippopotamuses, stuck on upright poles, mixed with skulls of oxen killed in honor of the defunct. The writers noted that a heap of stones protected the body. I photographed two types of cairn in the regions of Ganda and Luimbale respectively. Capello and Ivens are not precise in their locality, but I judge it to have been Long. 17° E. and Lat. 13° S., a considerable distance from my own observations (Plates XXXII, Fig. 1; LXXIV, Fig. 1). [766]

I photographed the stilt-walkers at the final stages of the initiation ceremonies at Cangamba. These men had no costumes; on the contrary they were almost naked but were covered with white clay. Capello and Ivens (p. 295), saw a stilt-walker with a feathered mask and a netting costume. Such attire I saw on an Uluchazi medicine-man, but not on the stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Figs. 1, 2). [481] [292]

I was unable to obtain information about the stilt-walkers, but Capello states that they castigated misdemeanants, punished shameless women, and accused criminals. Capello and Ivens were 187 miles to the northwest of my area of observation. The Uluchazi medicine-man, who appeared with the stilt-walkers during my visits, was said to make bad magic for women. The men ignored him but women gathered round in a derisive way; they quickly scattered when he pursued them. 693

Serpa Pinto, who made his journey across Angola in 1878, has so many references to customs and objects still extant, that I propose to tabulate his observations because of their value in showing the preservation of indigenous traits in spite of Portuguese contacts. 175 114

The body of a chief is buried with a covering of oxhide. Many oxen are sacrificed at the death of a king. The heir to the deceased is bound to sacrifice his whole herd in order to regale his people and give peace to the departed (S. Pinto, I, p. 63). The Ovimbundu conform at the present time to similar methods of burial and sacrifice. 175 766

Near Huambo, Serpa Pinto saw in every village a kind of "temple for conversation." This is the *onjango*, that I have described and photographed (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). It is the house in which all males foregather for the evening meal, which is brought by their women (I, p. 96). 175 [345]

The gathering and eating of caterpillars is described. This continues today (I, p. 120). [262]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

maker's dance seen at Ngongo, a village of Ngalangi in east-central Angola, will be described in dealing with the *ocimbanda* (chapter IX). 821

No man thinks that the course of the sun can be altered, but there seems to be a hope that the setting of the sun may be delayed. A man who is likely to be overtaken by darkness breaks a piece from an ant hill. This fragment is placed in the forked branch of a tree while the supplicant says, "Sun, wait a little while for me." (766)

Months are reckoned by observation of the moon. The new moon is *osoi* ("moon") *yokaliye* ("new"). There is no word for half moon. The phrase for full moon is *osoi yu tunga ohumba*. *Ohumba* means "basket"; therefore the idea appears to be that the full moon is round like the big basket used for field work.

A star is called *olumbungululu*. To describe a shooting star, the word *luenda* ("it goes") is added. The large bright morning star is *tanda*. Another bright star is *tielele*. Three bright stars in a line are the hunter, the dog, and the quarry. The three stars are *ukongo* ("hunter"), *lombua* ("the dog"), *locinyama* ("the animal").

An eclipse of the sun is *uteke wutanya*. The former word means "night," the latter word means "daylight." Hence the meaning is "night in daylight."

Small mammals are captured in cane traps or stunned with blunt wooden arrows. The pursuit of such animals is a pastime for boys who thereby receive their early training in hunting. Rats are used as food after being boiled and roasted. This fact accounts for interest in the following small mammals. 224 825 [262]

Umbili. This is a big black river rat, the largest of the water rats.

Ocifelefele. A big gray water rat (*Cricetomys?*), not so large as *umbili*.

Kalefe. A river rat something like the preceding one in appearance. *Kalefe* can stay in the water for a longer period than that endured by *ocifelefele*.

Epeke. This is a bush rat which is light gray in color.

Ekolongeje. This rat stays in the bush. It builds a nest in an ant hill from which it comes out only at night. The color is gray.

Elima (*Epomophorus*). This is the name given to the fruit bat. The word *elima* means "not one thing and not another." Thus *elima* is the word applied to a mulatto; he is not a Negro, not a white man.

Ocili (*Rhabdomys*). This is a large light brown mouse having white stripes on his back.

Ongenge. A mouse.

Epenyue. A black rat.

Ocipili. A mouse with a long thin nose, probably a shrew.

Ocinge. This is a very fat mouse.

Nakalongeka. This very small mouse makes a hole around which he piles grass to conceal the entrance.

Ongombeleka (*Lemniscomys*). A mouse with a stripe on his back.

Kandeti (*Dendromus*). A very little mouse something like *nakalongeka*.

312 bananas, but one could not say that irrigation is generally practised, even when circumstances permit.

245 The papaya and the banana are increasingly cultivated, but they are by no means generally distributed. Here and there I [249] have seen a little sugar-cane cultivated by natives for their own [244] use. Near the main railway natives may be seen selling their products, which include cabbages and tomatoes. Some natives are today planting the guava tree which yields sweet palatable fruits. The fruits *olasia* are collected from the *ussa* tree. When ripe, the fruit is yellow, round, and about two inches in diameter. These fruits are gathered in September, and the kernels, which are about the size of walnuts, are eaten uncooked. No fruits are collected for storage. *Olombala* fruits ripen in October, when they are eaten raw.

264 Each wife sends the food which she has cooked in her own kitchen to the *onjango* ("council house"). After carrying the food to this house of assembly, where the men meet each evening, the women return to their houses to eat alone, or with the young children.

343 252 [595] When there is a plurality of wives each has her own house and kitchen. Ngonga states that separate kitchens built outside the living houses are becoming more rare. The poor have their kitchens in the living room because they cannot provide separate structures for living and cooking.

264 262 252 The first meal is taken between five and six o'clock in the morning, the most usual food being meal sprinkled on boiling water to form a paste which is eaten with sweet potatoes. A mush of beans is eaten at night; generally there is no meal at midday. Three pounds of cooked beans are eaten by a person for one meal. Over the cooking pots leaves are placed to keep in the steam, especially when the pot contains sweet potatoes. I have made a meal from the sticky, gluey paste which results from sprinkling meal on boiling water. The chief objection to this food is the unpleasant quantity of grit in the meal, owing to the fact that it is pounded on the rocks. Manioc and sugar-cane are chewed at irregular intervals of the day.

262 The amount of meat consumed by the Ovimbundu is small in comparison with the quantity of vegetable food used. This adoption of diet of a particular kind is largely a matter of habit, and there is no good reason why meat should not form a larger proportion of the food supply. The Ovimbundu do not kill their cattle for food though they will eat the meat of oxen which have died from natural causes.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF13

The flesh of goats, sheep, and pigs might be more frequently used if these animals were bred and cared for under some system of animal husbandry. The Ovimbundu are familiar with the preservation of meat by smoking and drying it, because flesh of animals killed in the chase is sometimes preserved in this way by hunters, yet the method is not widely and constantly applied in order to assure a regular supply of meat. 262 (33) 251

Failure to utilize the milk of cattle and goats is another example of the neglect of useful commodities. The Vacilenge, who are near neighbors of the Ovimbundu, milk their cows as do the Ovimbundu themselves in some districts, though the practice is by no means general. Even where cows are milked, butter and cheese are not made, though the Ovimbundu know of the process, which is practised by the Vakuanyama of southern Angola. 234 171

There are three kinds of beer. *Ocisanapua* is a sweet beer which even children may drink because it is not intoxicating. Water is heated slowly in the pot but not boiled; meanwhile meal of Kafir corn or maize is added. Pounded sweet potato is strained in such a way that the liquid part goes into the beer pot; the residual mush is given to pigs. After the beer has cooled out of doors, it is transferred to a large gourd and allowed to stand over night. Next day it is considered a fit drink to consume or to offer to visitors (Plate XXIII, Fig. 3). 272

The making of an intoxicating beer *okundi* proceeds as for *ocisanapua*, but instead of adding strained liquid from sweet potatoes a root called *embundi* is included in the brew. The large pot containing this beer is covered tightly and allowed to stand untouched for twenty-four hours, at the end of which time it is a potent drink. It is important to note that the corn is allowed to sprout in the ground before it is made into the infusion to which the root *embundi* is added. 273

Ocimbombo is a strongly intoxicating drink. In order to prepare this brew, corn is soaked for a week; then it is left in the ground for the same length of time until it has germinated. It is then pounded on the rocks and placed in large pots filled with water to which sweet meal of corn is added. Simmering over the fire is continued for two days with constant stirring. This brew differs from *okundi* in the longer germination of the corn and the longer period of simmering. On the fourth day after the simmering is completed the drink is said to be ready for consumption. If the people have honey, they add some to the brew on the third day of standing. My inform-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Goats are more common than any other animal; there are few, 231
if any, families which do not own one or more goats. These animals are not fed or watered. Goats are able to exist on almost any kind of vegetation; consequently these animals are, almost without exception, well nourished. Goats are not milked. Kids are born at any time of the year, and the young males are castrated. The hides are used for making bags. The goat has the misfortune to be the most [782]
desirable sacrificial animal. This is not entirely due to the fact that it is cheap and easily obtainable. The sheep is said to be unsuitable as a sacrifice, because it does not make a noise when killed. The [237]
hair of the goat is used for making an ornament named osala, which is worn by medicine-men.

Sheep are of the long-tailed Syrian breed. Like the goats, the sheep are not cared for in any way; they find their own pasture and water, and in doing so may wander for a considerable distance, though they always return to the village at sunset. The males are not castrated. Sheep are not so frequently kept as are goats and pigs. The skin is used for making bags. Twin births of calves, kids, or lambs are not regarded with awe; on the contrary, such births are welcome.

Almost every man keeps one or more dogs, and I have rarely seen a hut in which there were no dogs. Usually young puppies are near the fire, and on the whole dogs are well treated because they are valuable in hunting. They also give warning of the approach of hyenas, lions, and leopards. I have frequently seen a person run into the road to pick up a dog when an automobile is approaching. A tendency to improve the breed of dogs by crossing the lean native animal with a breed of large dogs from South Africa has been mentioned. In contrast with the generally considerate treatment of dogs by the Ovimbundu one has to note the very emaciated and diseased condition of dogs in the Esele country. Among the Ovimbundu dogs [262]
are regarded as desirable food.

Sacrifice of a dog at the inauguration of a blacksmith will presently be described. A medicine-man who is about to perform a ceremony for curing the sick has to make a meal of dog's flesh, but otherwise the flesh of the dog is taboo to him. These points of ceremony, taken in conjunction with the food value of the animal, and its use in hunting, show that the dog is highly esteemed.

Poultry are of very mixed breeds. The standards of size and 235
weight are higher than is usual in African chickens, a fact which is perhaps attributable to contact of the Ovimbundu with the Portu-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF.3

235 (244) geese for a long period. The chicken is highly esteemed as a sacrificial animal, but it could not be said that the flesh is in common use. This failure to develop and utilize to the full, again raises the point of social custom and economic habit. Chickens are cared for, as may be seen in the way they are cooped at night. Sometimes a hen may be seen sitting on her clutch of eggs in a dark corner of a hut, unmolested by people and dogs; yet it is certain that there is no concentration on the rearing of poultry.

Eggs are laid, and chickens are hatched throughout the year except in the months of November and December when corn supplies [252] [264] are at their lowest ebb. Eggs are boiled, or fried on a fragment of pottery, but they are not sucked.

231 The domestic cat is not raised by the Ovimbundu. Wild cats are common, but there is no evidence of their domestication. Small birds and monkeys are sometimes kept as pets.

TRADE AND TRANSPORT

938 Caravan trade, which was at one time an important factor of tribal life, is now confined to short journeys for transporting corn, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. But in spite of present-day 939 decline of transportation the memory of more prosperous times still exists.

Names of distant places survive in the Umbundu language; thus Tanganyika is called Nakandundu, while the name for far eastern Angola is Muacimbundu, the name of a one-time important chief. The Umbundu language is understood in all parts of Angola, far away from typical Umbundu centers of culture.

484 In the old days there were professional leaders of caravans, and a 788 ceremony was conducted before starting. The medicine-man and the 778 village chief were the principal performers in a rite which consisted 787 of bringing from its box the head of a former chief, sewn in oxhide. An animal was sacrificed so that the blood could be used for sprinkling on the chief's head, and on some occasions of this kind the head was sewn up in a new piece of oxhide. Direct appeal was made to the preserved head by the reigning chief, who asked for good fortune on the journey.

The medicine-man who accompanied a caravan carried with him a female wooden figure decorated with feathers (Plate XXI, Fig. 5). When a branching of the paths gave rise to doubts concerning the correct way the wooden figure was consulted by the medicine-man.

W. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The hare is not carried over the shoulder, but has a ceremonial conveyance slung on poles (*owanda*) which are supported on the shoulders of two or even four men. 796 643

Laying the evil of a village on a goat, which is then driven out to die, is an Umbundu custom. The scapegoat ceremony has a cleansing function similar in purpose to the rekindling of fire for the community. Cavazzi pictured and described the scapegoat ceremony in the seventeenth century, and Ngonga informed me that he saw the rite twenty years ago. 783

PROHIBITIONS AND OMENS

There is a taboo against killing *olo kulu*, which is the yellow-backed duiker. When Ngonga was sick he was forbidden to eat the flesh of the duiker (*ombombi*); neither is this flesh to be eaten by people who suffer from dizziness. In former days women were not allowed to eat eggs. The flesh of sheep and goats is said to be indigestible for children between the ages of three and six years. The flesh of the lion, leopard, and hyena is forbidden as food for the king, but other people may eat it. The king is in fact forbidden to eat the flesh of any animal which has paws; neither may he eat flesh of the bush buck. A medicine-man must not eat flesh of a dog except before a ceremony for curing the sick. The taboo against dog's flesh applies also to the diet of a king. 262 [693]

A woman must not step over the legs of a male, neither must a man step over the legs of a woman; for to do so causes weakness of the knees. A man or woman may step over the legs of a child. 784

Omens are numerous. It is unfortunate to see a snake holding a frog, and the person who observes this should go to the medicine-man at once. When going to a village to be tried by the chief it is bad to meet some one who is carrying a bark rope, as this indicates binding and punishment. If a person who is setting out from home meets a woman carrying corn meal or any other white substance, he or she must take a little of the meal, whiten the face, and all will be well. A fly in the mouth is a good sign, because the fly knows where meat is to be obtained and is trying to lead the way. 787

A stranger visiting a village is pleased when a dog is the first animal to enter the guest house. Dogs are fed, so the entry of a dog is a sign that the visitor will receive food. On the contrary, the appearance of a goat is a bad omen, because goats are not fed; they pick up a frugal living as best they can. Other prohibitions and omens have been mentioned in discussing the pregnancy of women. [574]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

ing home from labour in October wants cleared fields to sow. If he cannot find any kinsman who would give him a cleared field he will have to buy one, and will have perhaps to pay 200 escudos (£2 10s.). A man retains his rights to fields in a village he no longer inhabits.

The Ovimbundu keep cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and fowls. The cattle are not milked but are used in sacrifices, and for fines; some have been brought by Ovimbundu from Kwanyama Ambo country but they do not seem to thrive in this neighbourhood. Sheep are few. In my village goats were much less numerous than chickens or pigs. The traders and European residents buy cattle, chickens, and pigs.

Fishing and hunting are practised, but despite the ingenious fish-traps, nets, poisons and weirs used for the first, and the popular enthusiasm for, and ritual associations of the second, neither dominates the actual food supply and ecological background in the way that maize does.

The Ovimbundu believe that the dry-season grass fires also help to fertilize the soil by leaving ashes. Ashes are sometimes spread in a village garden, and dry grass may also be left in a field for this purpose. Soil beside trees is considered to be especially rich, as to some extent are the sites of former villages. There is no idea of crop rotation and a field is worked for as long as it is fertile, that is indefinitely for an *osaka* and from three to six years, sometimes more, for a field of the *epya* type. The hoe is still the standard means of cultivation and the plough is a rarity.

Coffee-growing on any scale is usually undertaken by people living away from the villages, except for the Protestants who have been encouraged by their missionaries to plant coffee in their villages. Coffee, like maize, is bought by the traders. However, at least two local coffee-growers sold their coffee at Porto Amboim on the coast to get a better price. Basically, the agricultural economy of the neighbourhood is based on maize, grown by methods of shifting cultivation. The frequency with which villages rise and fall and individuals change from one village to another is entirely consistent with this type of agriculture.

Axe and hoe blades, blankets, cloths, clothing, cutlery,

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

drinking-mugs, lanterns, metal plates, pens, pencils, wine, and writing slates are bought from the traders. Axe and hoe handles, buckets, bedsteads, beer, bows and arrows, chairs, fish-traps, mats, mush sticks, pottery, pounding-blocks, stools, tables, and small metal objects such as knives are made by Ovimbundu and may be sold locally. To this local trade may be added the selling of pieces of meat by anyone who has killed a pig, or gone hunting and killed a duiker. Very occasionally somebody who has bought cloths in a town or has some hand-made object superior to the local average may tour villages selling his goods as a pedlar.

The only trade which at all recalls the days of the caravan trade is the cattle trade with the Kwanyama Ambo. As in the rubber trade the Ovimbundu make use of their intermediary geographical position. They obtain from Luanda shells called *elomanda* (singular *omanda*). One of these shells costs 10 escudos (2s. 6d.) at Luanda and ten of them will buy a beast in Kwanyama country. Alternatively 30 rounds of tobacco will buy a beast there. I knew several men who had made, or planned to make, trips of this nature. The analogy with the caravan trade breaks down, however, when the relative importance of the two is examined. The caravan trade determined the economic standards of the Ovimbundu, absorbed a great part of the time of every able-bodied man and youth, and influenced every aspect of Umbundu life from the foreign policy of the kings to accusations of sorcery; the cattle-keeping is relatively unimportant economically since the Ovimbundu do not drink milk, and eat meat, even chicken or pork, very irregularly, nor does the occasional sale of cattle to traders altogether balance their uncertain survival away from their indigenous grasses. The real importance of cattle in the economy seems to be as a form of capital investment for spare savings, an investment which can be liquidated either by sacrifice on ceremonial occasions or back into money by sale. Socially, it may be thought of as marking the survival of the Umbundu capacity and enthusiasm for trading in an age when the economic situation has closed the old routes. Indeed, perhaps the subconscious motive for the Ovimbundu who trade is to show that they can act outside of that economic framework of cultivation